



Romanian Cultural Resolution

The Centre for Contemporary Culture "Club Electroputere" (Craiova) & The Romanian Cultural Institute "Titu Maiorescu" (Berlin) announce the opening of the exhibition "Romanian Cultural Resolution" hosted by the Spinnerei (Halle 12) Werkschau, Leipzig.

The exhibition presents ideas and images gathered from the Romanian visual arts over the last twenty years of the changing post-Communist culture.

The event is built around the concept of "cultural resolution", an analysis of contemporary cultural discourse through art. A dominant theme is the deep cultural nature of the post-Communist experience, characterized by a constant reference to the past and the corresponding projection of a democratic future. Both these features contribute to the legitimation of a cultural discourse which originates in the distressing legacy of a decayed political regime.

Since the fall of Communism and the instinctive rejection that it aroused there have followed two decades of self-imposed learning of the fundamentals of democracy. The art works that make up the "Romanian Cultural Resolution" Project aim to raise questions about the time and space typical of the post-Communist experience. It takes an introspective look at contemporary art and culture and dismantles the previous cultural utopia. The exhibition is made up of four trustee projects with contributions from the most important names in Romanian contemporary art.

An Image instead of a Title

Mircea Cantor, Anca Munteanu Rimnic, Ciprian Mureșan, Ioana Nemeș, Miklos Onucsan, Cristian Rusu, Serge Spitzer

Curator: Mihnea Mircan

The 'Gospel of St. John' is transcribed on copy-sheets, seemingly in preparation of a most difficult exam (Ciprian Mureșan); the

Venetian street sign 'Calle della morte' is zoomed on and filmed until the hands start shaking and the frame loses focus (Cristi Rusu); in a variation on the Vanitas, the history of rust is methodically told from its 'origins to the present' as a think layer of decrepitude, in the absence of the rusting object (Miklos Onucsán); the colors of the Romanian flag, of the country just abandoned and the ideological brutality which had led to the artist's exile, become visual obstacles, and 'materialize' the interdiction to look and speak (Serge Spitzer).

Alongside the fragments of cultural or social history they invoke or circulate, these and other works in the exhibition *An Image instead of A Title* have a complicated, obstinate relationship to the notions of the archive habitually employed by art history.

The show seeks to articulate a mode of the archival where images, rather than the textual props that would anchor them to cultural or political narratives, constitute their own index. Between a model of homogenous correspondences of identities to objects and worlds, where each unit gestures towards the whole and interlocks with all others, and the converse one - typified by the Library of Alexandria and by much recent art -, where conservation coincides with destruction, the works gathered here operate in, and delimit, a territory of oblique gazes, undone connections and archival numbness, upset indexes and selves.

Here and Then

Alexandra Croitoru, Ștefan Tiron in collaboration with Vasile Pop-Negreșteanu, Adrian Ghenie, Ion Grigorescu and Matei Lazărescu, Julian Mereuță, Aurelia Mihai, Ciprian Mureșan & Adrian Ghenie, Miklos Onucsán

Curator: Magda Radu

Here and Then is a transgenerational exhibition that explores the topic of 'artist at work', bringing forward such issues as the

relation between past and present, the question of national identity and the entanglement between artistic agency and political context. Most of the works featured in this selection assume an autobiographical stance, and they reveal - through self-representation and performativity - the condition of the artist in a problematic environment.

The never-before seen photographs made by Julian Mereuta in 1970 are emblematic of the marginality of certain artistic practices during communism, and thus, of the impossibility of working within a restrictive system. By contrast, Ciprian Mureșan brings into discussion another facet of the artistic production, namely the proliferation of official art that inflated Ceausescu's personality cult. Croitoru and Tiron's project - A Fresco for Romania - investigates the possibility of representing the troubled history of Romania's recent past by modulating the subject matter through the working method of an artist who used to receive public commissions before 1989.

Showing continuity with earlier preoccupations, a recent series of photographs by Ion Grigorescu depict the artist being involved in everyday activities, which are invested by him with a ritualistic dimension. Miklos Onucsan's discrete performances turned into self-portraits are charged with a political undertone, providing a subtle commentary on the artist's place in society "along the way".

Fetish Factory

**Pavel Brăila, Ștefan Constantinescu, Daniel Knorr,
Alexandru Niculescu, Dan Perjovschi**

Curator: Adrian Bojenoiu

The concept proposes the partial simulation of the cultural field for recent Romanian history. The title *Fetish factory* is the expository name of this cultural field. It allusively appoints the bearing mechanisms of the post communist allocution, implicitly

involving the contemporary culture. By fashioning the traumatic past experienced during communism into cultural parlance it becomes a cultural product with shaping effect. Moreover it aggregates an ambivalence based upon acknowledgement and repudiation.

The project foregathers the works of five artists drawing a bead on outlining a contrasting and reflexive vision over culture; an external glance centered on the utopia, contradictions and cultural solutions supplied by recent history.

Daniel Knorr's "The state of mind" exhibits cellulose wraps forged with documents destroyed by the STASI. Stefan Constatinescu and Pavel Braila look into the recent socio-political context whose abstract personage is "emancipation". Dan Perjovschi's designs schematize the boorish everyday state, replying to an immediate environment and supplying a prejudiced exposition. Alexandru Niculescu renders socio-dramatic sceneries into objects at the abstract borderline.

Figurative Painting in romania, 1970 - 2010

Ioana Bătrânu, Corneliu Brudașcu, Sorin Câmpan, Constantin Flondor, Adrian Ghenie, Gheorghe Ilea, Victor Man, Gili Mocanu, Șerban Savu

Curator: Mihai Pop

The exhibition presents an overview of figurative painting in Romania in the last 40 years. It features artists with a particular commitment to the medium: works by Ioana Bătrânu, Corneliu Brudașcu, Sorin Câmpan, Constantin Flondor or Gheorghe Ilea preserve their pictorial intensity and could contribute to a more nuanced understanding of the period before 1989. They make visible a double removal: created at a distance from the official painting of those times, they also do not partake in the mimetism of new models in international painting after 1989. In most cases, essential works by these artists have never left the studio, and have remained culturally and commercially undervalued. The

exhibition proposes them as landmarks for a yet unwritten history of the Romanian art scene.

The end of the '90s saw the emergence of artists such as Adrian Ghenie, Victor Man, Gili Mocanu and Șerban Savu, recharting the 'neofigurative' both across art history, but also in relation to the data and values of the space they live and work in; their work is often concerned with social and cultural transition, honing on the ambiguities of recent history - as in the case of Victor Man, and his overriding preoccupation with "The place I'm coming from", in all its polysemy.