

Solo Show by Liene Pavlovskā "Close Your Eyes and Smile"

Dates: 22.8.2019 – 6.10.2019

Venue: Kim? Contemporary Art Centre, Riga

A Comet

I, the reader, once obtained a lottery ticket. It was that time in London, when I didn't understand why I was being hounded from all sides by colourful signs and beams. It felt like someone was commenting that it was what all locals do. Togetherness and isolation has also seeped into Shirley Jackson's short story "The Lottery" (1948) that takes place in a remote village where inhabitants sacrifice one person a year in order to preserve the island's insular community. Someone draws the unlucky straw and becomes the one who will be stoned by the others. The possibility to win or lose envelops us like a mist from which only a few emerge. In the moment of winning, with the speed of a photo flash, someone is illuminated and changes from companion into the lucky chosen one. In August 2014, a human-sized Mickey Mouse went to cash in a winning lottery for 80 million dollars. A few months later, the winner was a bear. I read somewhere that it is a lucky sign to be followed by an unknown dog. Nevertheless, the necessity to completely cover up your identity and become a panda, monkey or transformer to preserve your luck like a fresh scar, is understandable.

How does one get out of the collective, electromagnetic aurora borealis saturated with hope, which cracks as a ghostly wail with every step? Faith, or at least hope, is after all the fragile thread that ties us all together in united anticipation that we will get a table on the café terrace, or that it will not rain precisely when we're going out for a walk, or that our vote will influence the outcome of the elections. Or that we will accidentally become the curator, of an exhibition that feels the space, activates it, and finds refuge there. Above the drainpipes that lead us to the performance, the shabby corners, a faceless space decorated with shiny shields, where supervisors in threatening uniforms look daggers as they guard the stage and the viewers. The absurdity of life is absorbed in polyurethane foam panels, rarely breaking into the spotlight, but becomes a comet through the shyly winking eye of the TV camera that everyone who experiences disturbances in their silent subconscious fixes into their memory, or captures with other recording devices.

A feeling of delayed premonition arises in those moments when the trolleybus comes on time, you find 20 euros in last year's winter coat, or when you are not knocked down in the street, but rather someone next to you— 'a coin was observed, a stork, a sunrise.' For some, their everyday life becomes a quest for and a registration of signs. Each ray of sun, or drop of rain is seen as a promise. It is possible that we accidentally agree to participate in a lottery all the time, quickly forgetting about it, slipping into a silent unconsciousness between a past that has never existed, and future expectations.

Text: Kaspars Groševs

Liene Pavlovskā (1987, Latvia)

An artist and set designer whose creative work is centred on studying individual and group responsibility in a socio-political context. She also explores the relationship between actor and viewer. Pavlovska is interested in using theatrical modes of expression and the experience of catharsis in the context of visual art. She received her Master's degree in Scenography from the Art Academy of Latvia, and from the Sandberg Institute in Amsterdam where she studied in the department Studio for Immediate Spaces.