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PRESS RELEASE

From 13 September until 13 December 2015 **Vleeshal, Middelburg** presents two exhibitions, running in dialogue: Ola Vasiljeva's first solo institutional exhibition in the Netherlands at Vleeshal Markt and a group exhibition by the Oceans Academy of Arts at Vleeshal Zusterstraat. The opening is on Saturday September 12th from 5 to 7 p.m..

Ola Vasiljeva, *En Rachâchant*

The exhibition borrows its title *En Rachâchant* from a short film by Jean-Marie Straub and Danièle Huillet based on the children's story *Ah! Ernesto* by Marguerite Duras. It takes a humorous look at de-hierarchising the educational process through the character of Ernesto, who insistently refuses to go to school because it teaches things he doesn't know.

In *En Rachâchant*, Vasiljeva strategically approaches negation and the refusal to learn. In a time when the market logic dominates all fields of teaching and dictates that knowledge must be rentable in economic terms, this show mounts a playful assault on this ideology.

The exhibition takes the form of an anti-pedagogical stage, populated by mixed media works, sculptures and drawings that manipulate motifs related to the subject of disobedience as a course of learning. As part of the exhibition, Vasiljeva has developed two course programmes: *The Course in Lying* and *The Course in Doubt*, which will be incorporated within Vleeshal's education programme during the exhibition.

Ola Vasiljeva (1981, Ventspils, LV) lives and works in Amsterdam. Recent solo exhibitions include *'The Limp of A Letter'*, BOZAR, Brussels (2015); *'University'*, Galerie Antoine Levi, Paris (2015); *'Jargo't*, Art in General, NewYork (2014); *'The Limp of A Letter'*, Prix de Rome, de Appel, Amsterdam, (2013); *'Cinq à sept'*, kim? Contemporary Art Centre, Riga (2013). Her work has been recently included in the group exhibitions: XII Baltic Triennial, CAC, Vilnius (2015); *'Society Acts'*, Moderna Museet, Malmö (2014); *'Last Seen Entering the Biltmore'*, South London Gallery, London (2014); *'What Were You Expecting, Mr. Milquetoast, a Plot?'*, Badischer Kunstverein, Karlsruhe (2014); *'Fusiform Gyruus'*, Lisson Gallery, London (2013). Ola Vasiljeva is represented by Galerie Antoine Levi in Paris.

The Oceans Academy of Arts, *University*

With Özlem Altin, Matthew Lutz-Kinoy, Ola Vasiljeva and Marianne Vierø

University plays with the idea of experimental pedagogical systems, which formed a critique of society's major ideological institutions. Such schools experimented with self-organised education and were founded in response to the intellectual bankruptcy and spiritual emptiness of the approved educational establishment. They proposed courses that opposed conservative educational programmes and idealised the unrestricted development of thought.

The Oceans Academy of Arts (OAOA) was founded in 2008 by Ola Vasiljeva as a similar experimental platform under the umbrella of contemporary art. This semi-fictional institution presents itself as real, yet plays with its own illusive image and approaches the exhibition space, the work of art and the role of the artist as reflections of the same body.

Just as the Anti-University rejected so-called 'conscious practices', OAOA sees the idea of 'un-learning' in relation to the critique of reason and sense in general. Here nonsense, fragmentation and forgetfulness triumph over reason, form, function and chronology. OAOA regularly publishes a zine. On the occasion of *University* a new edition of the zine has been made.



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