

Dawid Misiorny, Cezary Poniatowski  
ZIP

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## Unscrupulous

The longer you look, the less sense you can see. A shiver of anxiety runs down your spine. Voices of doubt have been heard for a long time. "Anything that has the ability to start over and repeat itself becomes obscure and silent. Function exists only outside of consciousness. Consciousness lasts only in the face of accidents."<sup>1</sup> And it is the accidents that become repetitive and lead again and again to some mysterious end point or rather a situation that is hard to call intentional. It seems that now, before your eyes, the world of reason, based on logic and the power of rationality, is dying.

Dawid Misiorny generates his paintings from the layers of photos of bushes and scaffolding, nets, rhizomes, fences, factory corridors, leaves and windows. Cezary Poniatowski transforms used carpets and artificial leather into quasi-painting reliefs and sculptural objects. Both artists manipulate plastic tissue, which is densely saturated with meaning, in their own ways. One of them uses tools and the other materials against their intended purpose and contrary to common sense. They do it on their own, in a makeshift, rapid, 'erroneous' way. They consistently repeat and lead to a closed form of an undertaking that should not happen, that has no reason to exist nor even a spontaneous chance of even accidental occurrence. In one exhibition space, these subversive incidents are duplicated and – co-occurring with each other – they become even more unbelievable, as if two lone wolves accidentally attacked in the same place.

One of them creates images and objects in the form of painting and sculpture by manually manipulating machine fabrics. The other exhibits classically framed photos, which are transformed using machine technology. Misiorny uses a very precise graphic approach, which is usually used by photographers of complex technical devices or sophisticated jewellery, which allows for creating one perfect image of an irregular object from many photos, in which every detail can be perfectly sharp and illuminated. Dawid, however, feeds this algorithm with photographs he takes with an analogue camera in accordance with his obsessions. The artist uploads huge amounts of data - almost fluid, cinematic, or akin to music videos - and tells the machine to update them into one potential state, as if all possible moments were to happen at once, all drives and anxieties were to become reality. The final image is a superposition of the author's visual fascinations and is more like a psychedelic trip than a typological *Zip*. Nevertheless, the machine does its job to the best of its ability, assembles successive fragments of street situations, natural incidents and architectural failures into increasingly abstract compositions. The device is perfidiously deceived, caught in a trap in which achieving the goal is not so much impossible as contrary to the prevailing logic. However, this does not disturb the work of the machine itself, which analyses point by point and meticulously generates subsequent absurd views.

Similarly, Poniatowski also works contrary to logic, but in a completely different world. This time the transformation is done manually, by himself, but the material used is of machine origin. The raw material was extracted from the interior design afterlife and revived. Cezary uses old carpets, soaked with dust, spilled liquids and the weathered smell of non-existent apartments and the people who lived there. With the help of small appliances and the simplest assembly technique, he resurrects the lifeless matter of home life. There is something funny and terrifying about it, like the crude jokes of Baron Samedi.

Algorithmic image manipulation and machine weaving are basically two points on one line of civilisation development. The jacquard machine, created at the very beginning of the 19th century, was the first programmable device for creating images. The pattern coded with holes on the punched card allowed for the creation of large-format, complex fabrics. This progenitor of computers was in fact the first graphics programme. The factories that produced the carpets used by Poniatowski and the programme used by Misiorny have implemented exactly the same idea - a device takes over the effort of performing meticulous work, thanks to which a flawless image is created. In both cases, the art is based on machine operation that requires attention to the smallest details and strict adherence to the rules.

Consistency and absolute concentration have never been most people's strong points, nor have they ever been particularly liked. Rigid adherence to the rules and care for the smallest detail, i.e. meticulousness – contrary to all appearances – has always rather been a disadvantage. The term *scrupulositas* was created in the medieval church to indicate the problem of people who were unable to confess fully, who saw sin in every action or lack of it, analysing the components of their deeds and thoughts in ever smaller details. The word comes from the Latin *scrupulus*, i.e. a tiny pebble, the smallest Roman measure (about 1.2 grams) because the spiritual life of a person with a meticulous conscience resembled walking with a pebble in one's shoe.<sup>2</sup>

Poniatowski and Misiorny use the obsessive-compulsive work of visual machines. They knock them off kilter, make them lose a step and start dancing. Misiorny's photos have a strongly hallucinatory character; it is impossible to be fooled by the polite display and traditional setting. Poniatowski's reliefs only seem to resemble something, their dark matter has been individualised and restructured into new animistic objects that are not furniture, sculptures or paintings, but rather entities that can be confronted face to face. A formal assignment of the outcomes of Poniatowski's necromancy is probably neither possible nor necessary, his objects create places for themselves and build their own collection. Just as it makes no sense to classify Misiorny's photos, either in the field of photography in general or in the work of the artist himself.

In both cases, the energetic intensification, the extraordinary condensation of dense imagery, is the most important. Both artists explore, and at the same time play with, technical-utilitarian structures that generate vital phenomena and situations. They provoke real change and genuine movement. You can get used to the fact that art results from something, that it is chewing up the free matter of the world or oneself, draining life-giving forces, sucking out spiritual power. Things are quite different here. This time you face generators of faith in the unlimited power of human wandering, fantastic objects, fascinating and almost devotional celebrating what emerges unexpectedly.

