

Studio Voltaire presents *The Method*, an exhibition devised by Paulina Olowska including works by Władysław Hasior, Matthias Schaufler and Włodzimierz Wiczorkiewicz. The presentation will also include a new body of works made by Paulina Olowska as a response to the other artist's work.

Three large paintings by Matthias Schaufler depict almost ghost like torsos in abstract landscapes that appear to be made up of the gestures of which the figures were made. While being aware of the sculptural form of the body and its physical weight, there is a sense of other worldliness with how the figures float almost like apparitions. The titles of Schaufler's works often suggest some reference to narrative, for example interpreting particular Greek and religious myths. The paintings take on more of a metaphysical approach, engaging with how the body exists within the world. The figures occupy their own space, and could be understood as acting autonomously. In a sense this state of autonomy can be extended to the artist's practice itself with his distinctive palette and style.

This idea of a figure occupying its own territory is explored in Władysław Hasior's work *Uzurpator/Usurper* (circa 1970); a lion-like figure resides over his own space and makes his own rules. Hasior's assemblages of various found objects and materials have been described as an obscure provincial variety of Pop Art mixed with Arte Povera with his use of kitsch/consumerist objects alongside more native materials and customs. The resulting practice remains difficult to name and is quite distant to the academic sculptural traditions of the time, and has more linkage to the vernacular traditions of making devotional objects in Podhale, the region of Poland where he lived. Cult and pagan symbolism runs throughout the works. The assemblages in the show are lent from Tatra Museum, Zakopane, the permanent home of his studio/gallery – a particular environment he created for the display of his works.

Włodzimierz Wiczorkiewicz's practice is rooted within both handicraft and modernist traditions, utilising traditional craft skills to create formal compositions. His extensive practice in the Applied Arts spanned fashion items, set design, metal and leather works. Often placed within Polish and German middle class homes, these crafted works offered an alternative to the standardised objects most commonly available in the Eastern Block. Although primarily an exploration of form and material, the works reference particular signs and symbols found within objects such as shields and totems. In a similar formal chapel space to where Studio Voltaire is located, Wiczorkiewicz established The Sulmin Gallery in a village near to Gdansk in the late 1970s to display his works, as well as hosting occasional events and exhibitions of other artists. In 2005 the gallery burnt down, leaving just a few works of Wiczorkiewicz left.

The title of the exhibition – *The Method* – comes from both Studio Voltaire's gallery space being a

former Methodist church and the idea of method of production/working method. There is a sense with all the artists selected by Olowska of their practices sitting outside of current modes of production, that either the work could be considered outdated, unfashionable or culturally redundant. This exhibition aims to provide a platform in which the works can be reconsidered in terms of their value and status within current forms of cultural production. Production also features in the subject matter of Olowska's paintings and collages with the inclusion of factories and workers, as well images of other artist's work. Car factory labourers become producers of abstract sculpture objects, while other paintings attempt to capture a moment of energy in making and creativity.

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