

The word *Autopis* is an invented term open to interpretation. In different languages it can bring diverse associations, such as the notion of something self-written or mobile, a urinal, an autopsy, or utopia. The term 'auto' suggests a thing or phenomena that is one's own, by oneself or spontaneous and by itself and automatic. The words notes, copies and masterpieces considered in relation to *Autopis*, have shifting meanings, and imply a loosening of the conventional system of cultural evaluation. The works in the exhibition can be understood as objects to be approached in an inventive way rather than being viewed in the light of existing definitions.

1
UNTITLED III (PLATFORM)
6 x 220 x 280 cm, MDF, acrylic, table, chairs

The work takes shape of a minimalist sculpture and functions as a platform for a gallery office. The boundaries between gallery - idealized place devoted to the presentation and contemplation of art and the office space are blurred. The work exposed in the middle of white cube, spatially and conceptually understood as center of information, planning and management, becomes utilitarian object, which questions the autonomy of art.

2
PRIMARY STRUCTURE WITH A PLANT (THE PLANT AS A METAPHOR IN
GEORGE ORWELL AND OTHER CONTEXTS)
162 x 55 x 35 cm, MDF, acrylic, electric mechanism, pot plant

A potted plant emerges from a white box of human proportions and perches for a few seconds on its top like a sculpture on a plinth. Soon after it slowly disappears into the pedestal and the box becomes once again an indefinite object: a minimalist sculpture, a plinth, or a piece of furniture. The title of the work references the radical proposition of the New Art movement also known as Minimalism, and recalls the exhibition *Primary Structures: Younger American and British Sculpture* at the Jewish Museum in New York in 1966. A plant of the kind used in the sculpture is usually associated with institutions and offices. It also appears on the cover of the book *Let the Aspidistra Fly* by George Orwell and functions as a symbol of philistine conformism, the abandonment of romantic ideals and a subordination to the world of consumption. The cube and the plant form a living sculpture that evokes the institutionalization and commercialization of art.

3
THE TRADITION OF INTENSITY AND FORCE
41 x 29 cm, MDF, print on paper (photomontage comprising portraits of
leading twentieth century avant-garde groups)

A photo collage comprising several portraits of leading avant-garde artistic circles, scanned from text-books about art in the twentieth century. The only females included are Hedda Sterne, an American artist who contributed to the Abstract Expressionist movement, and Rotraut Uecker, a German-French artist and the wife of Yves Klein. Their careers and work have been almost completely overlooked by the art-historical narratives.

4
COMPOSITON OF INFORMATION
18 x 13 cm, collage (superimposed on *Composition of Space, Calculating
the Space-Time Continuum* by Katarzyna Kobro, Władysław
Strzemiński, Łódź 1931. a.r. No 2)

This is a modified excerpt from a 1931 theoretical text by two Polish avant-garde artists Kobro and Strzeminski, outlining their views on sculpture and space. While preserving the layout of the first page taken from the original publication, Ostoya substitutes only the necessary key words to introduce her own ideas on today's works of art. Kobro and Strzeminski believed that the main function of sculpture was to negotiate the relationship between the space of the sculpture and its environment. Ostoya proposes: *'Every work of art in one way or another has an answer to the most important problems: The relationship between the information contained within the work to the information found beyond the work.'*

5
FEMALE PSEUDOMORPHISMS
13 x 7 x 7 cm, 13 x 9 x 9 cm, 13 x 11 x 11 cm, MDF, print on paper

A work in three parts pairing the mirror images of female portraits, selected on the basis of their visual and semantic similarities. In each of the twin images one woman is widely known and easily recognizable,

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Notes, Copies
and Masterpieces

Anna Ostoya

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whereas her counterpart is Polish and therefore known only to a particular audience. These double portraits depicts the wives of politicians - Jacqueline Lee Bouvier Kennedy Onassis and Nina Andrycz, pop-culture figures - Brigitte Bardot and Kalina Jedrusik, and visual artists - Eva Hesse and Alina Szapocznikow.

6

CONSTRUCTION/DECONSTRUCTION

66 x 43 cm, oil on canvas (based on the cover for *Reconstructing Modernism, Art in New York, Paris and Montreal: 1945-1964*, Cambridge and London: The MIT Press 1990)

The painting is based on the cover of *Reconstructing Modernism, Art in Paris, Montreal and New York*, a collection of essays by prominent writers on art after the Second World War. The cover, with its pink outlines, depicts a model posing in front of a Jackson Pollock painting. It comes from a fashion photograph made by Cecil Beaton and published in *Vogue* magazine in 1954. The image reinforces the stereotype of a woman as a passive object of beauty. It also promotes a new lifestyle where modern art, not unlike a fashionable dress, becomes a commodity.

7

COPY ERRORS

30 x 60 x 2 cm, MDF, photocopy, collage, publication *Galeria Foksal 1966-1994*

The names of male and female artists, taken from the publication *Foksal Gallery 1966-1994*, are highlighted in two different colors: men in blue and women in pink. The two-color diagram underscores the ratio of men and women included in the book. The same diagram photocopied in black and white loses its meaning through the transformation of color differentiations into monochrome, neutral signs.

8

RECONSTRUCTION/CONSTRUCTION

66 x 43 cm, oil on canvas (based on a photo in *Time Out* magazine advertising an exhibition by Carissa Rodriguez, New York 2010)

This painting is inspired by a photograph from *Time Out* magazine advertising the exhibition of the artist, writer and gallerist Carissa Rodriguez at the Swiss Institute in New York City in 2010. The depicted woman-in-motion (Carissa Rodriguez) is dressed in a work of art titled 'Skirt,' quite simply a pleated skirt made of silk from 2010. In the painting the walking figure is partially abstracted - a manipulation that transforms the stereotypical female passivity into the act of creation and participation.

9

VISUAL PSEUDOMORPHISM IN COLOR

30 x 22 x 22 cm, MDF, print on paper (based on a reproduction of *Do It Yourself (Landscape)* by Andy Warhol, 1962 and *Metaphysics* by Jarosław Kozłowski, 1972)

Taking the form of a cube, this work uses fragments of the 1962 Andy Warhol painting *Do It Yourself (Landscape)* and the 1972 work by Jarosław Kozłowski entitled *Metaphysics*. The image of a house and a landscape from Warhol's picture is placed on the front of the cube, with peep-holes replacing the pictorial windows. The room interiors from Kozłowski's photograph are printed onto the inside of the cube. The two cited works belong to different artistic traditions and represent different media yet they share a visible common element— numbers. By responding to the analogy of numbers and the representations of the house and the room, Ostoya continues Warhol and Kozłowski's inquiry into the systems of signs. The literal peeking through the façade hints at the possibility of further associations that would include new ways of depicting and understanding reality.

10

VISUAL PSEUDOMORPHISM IN MONOCHROME

2 x 60 x 40 cm, MDF, print on paper (based on Robert Morris's installation at Green Gallery, New York, 1964 and *Environment* by Zbigniew Gostomski, Foksal Gallery, Warsaw 1967)

This work uses photo-documentation of works by Robert Morris (Green Gallery, New York, 1964) and Zbigniew Gostomski (Foksal Gallery, Warsaw, 1967), assuming the form of a jigsaw puzzle. Both artists utilized minimalist objects in large format to create their installations. Ostoya has cut up photographic reproductions into segments, which she then attaches to small pieces of similarly shaped wood. The arrangement of these puzzle cuts, the modification of scale and the peculiar flattening of the two prints all reference the question of

spatial illusion and sculpture, and investigate the creative process in different historical and geographical contexts.

11
PSEUDOMORPHISM OF A POLITICAL EVENT
16 x 18 x 13 cm, MDF, print on paper

The photograph shows students from the University of Warsaw protesting against censorship in March 1968. This is mirrored by another image documenting a protest against the Vietnam War, the draft and racism in April of the same year, organized by New York University students. The work, installed at the corner of the exhibition space, reflects the oppression of power, the desire for freedom and the elimination of violence, while provoking a reflection on the parallels between the two oppositional movements.

12
RADICAL PSEUDOMORPHISM
16 x 21 x 10 cm, print on paper, MDF

Two images are juxtaposed: a 1910 portrait of the Russian artist Natalia Goncharova in provocative make-up and a portrait of the Polish artist Wilhelm Sasnal heavily made up for a Marc Jacobs advertising campaign in 2006. The two portraits, depicting the traditional medium of painting being used to adorn the body, albeit to different effect, invite the viewer to question the inseparability of art and life, the desire to physically manifest one's creative personality, the role of provocation and scandal in art and the notion of a celebrity artist.

13
ADAD GOOD SPIRITS
30 x 22 x 16 cm, MDF, printout, paper, acrylic

Two small objects are placed on a white shelf. One of them is a cylindrically rolled print depicting the Dada artist Hugo Ball photographed during his performance on June 23, 1916 at Cabaret Voltaire in Zurich. Ball, dressed in a cubist costume, recites his poem *Karavane*. The second white object carries the inscription 'Anna Ostoya ist politisch,' reminiscent of the slogan 'DADA ist politisch' (DADA is political) from the 1920 Berlin exhibition *DADA Messe* (Dada Fair). In Ostoya's work political repetition has a double meaning: it recalls the gesture that the Dadaists intended to be revolutionary as well as emphasizing the necessity of creating and perceiving art while acknowledging one's social and political conditions. The spirit of DADA and satire as a reaction to trauma and injustice is symbolically represented by small-scale sculptural figures guarding the exhibition.

14
UNTITLED (TODAY)
Text

The text-work on the last page of the Foksal publication looks like an extract from a composition, and was written by Anna Ostoya. In short declarations it presents a utopian version of reality in which the injustices and conflicts of the world are eradicated through bloodless transformation and love. The layout, rhythm and message of the text makes it resemble a manifesto, a poem or a prayer that forges the reawakening of visionary engagement. *Untitled (Today)* can be shown in different forms, e.g. as a poster, or a printout.

15
PAINTED COLLAGED VISUAL PSEUDOMORPHISM
61 x 61 cm, oil on canvas

The new painting based on collaged reproductions of *Counter-composition V* from 1924, by the Dutch artist and architect Theo van Doesburg, and *Composition* from 1929-30, by the Polish painter Henryk Stażewski, has been executed by Anna Ostoya in oil on canvas. The superimposition of two different yet visually similar works brings to the light the idea of pseudomorphism - the pairing of similar images, which Ostoya investigated. Employing an avant-garde vocabulary, the artist proposes a new abstract composition, made with 'non-orthodox' methodology resembling neither Van Doesburg's nor Stażewski's.

16
PSEUDOMORPHISM OF A POLITICAL EVENT II
11 x 16 x 13 cm, plywood, acrylic, print on paper

Tadeusz Kluba's photograph from 1982, showing a *Solidarność* (Solidarity Trade Union) miners' strike at the Sosnowiec coal mine, is mirrored with Henk Tukker's image taken in Utrecht in 1983, documenting joint action of the FNV (Federation Dutch Labour Movement) unions. This corner piece focused on fights for the rights of

workers from Poland and the Netherlands reflects the transnational desire for decent working conditions and civil freedom.

17

PSEUDOMORPHISM IN ACTION

20 x 25 x 4 cm, plywood, acrylic, print on paper

Two images are juxtaposed: a photograph of Jackson Pollock (1912 – 1956), American painter, famous for innovative “gestural abstraction”, nicknamed “Jack the Dripper”, major figure of Abstract Expressionism, photographed by Hans Namuth in 1950, and a film still from the movie *The Reality of Karel Appel* by Jan Vrijman from 1961 depicting Karel Appel (1921 – 2006), Dutch painter renowned for his frenetic style, dubbed the “paint thrower”, cofounder of the COBRA group (1949-1951). The two men are shown at work, making their paintings in a dance- or a fight-like movement as if in an interaction with each other.

18

TRIPLE PSEUDOMORPHISM OF EMINENCE

28 x 8 x 1 cm, MDF, plywood, acrylic, print on paper

The work presents three group portraits of visual artists and musicians: American conceptualists (Robert Barry, Douglas Huebler, Joseph Kosuth and Lawrence Weiner), English rock band The Beatles (George Harrison, Paul McCartney, John Lennon and Ringo Starr), and Polish artists (Lech Mrożek, Jan Świdziński, Henryk Gajewski and Romuald Kutera) – representing contextual practice. Standing in a row in similar poses, the men confront the viewer. This matching of artists associated with immaterial artworks with images of world-famous musicians, whose albums are being sold online in digital format since 2010, brings to light the failure of anti-commodity strategies that have been appropriated by the market. The work as well points towards the growing importance of celebrity trend in popular and high culture.

19

MIXED PSEUDOMORPHISM OF A TRUE/FALSE CRY

13x 20 x 3 cm, plywood, acrylic, print on paper (based on *Étude* a photograph by Germaine Krull, 1931 showing a model Wanda Hubbel in tears and *I'm too sad to tell you* a photograph by Bas Jan Ader, 1970 depicting the crying artist).

Two portraits, a man and a woman in tears (the model Wanda Hubbel and the artists Bas Jan Ader) are cut and mixed with one another. By depriving both models of defined gender, the artist allows the work to question the stereotypical representation of strong masculinity and weak femininity. The unclear close-ups of their faces make us doubt the authenticity of the exhibited emotion. The story behind the two photographs, that by Ader conceived as an artwork and that by Krull as an illustration to a romantic detective story, deepens a distrust with respect to the affective power of images.

20

ANTHROPOMORPHIC VISUAL PSEUDOMORPHISM

13 x 13 x 13 cm, plywood, acrylic, print on paper (based on a photo *Untitled (Desire)* by David Wojnarowicz, 1988 and still from *Un Chien Andalou* by Luis Buñuel and Salvador Dalí, 1929)

The work brings together two images: a reproduction of the work *Untitled (Desire)* from 1988, by American artist David Wojnarowicz, and a still from the movie *Un Chien Andalou* from 1929, by Spanish artists and filmmakers Luis Buñuel and Salvador Dalí. In both images, ants are portrayed in relation to the human body, thus bringing to mind the legacy of surrealism and associations with decay and death. Here the artistic metaphor relates to a political reality and to the fact that both Buñuel's and Wojnarowicz's works have frequently been attacked by conservatives. Wojnarowicz's film *Fire in My Belly* was censored in November 2010 in the exhibition *Hide/Seek: Difference and Desire in American Portraiture* at the National Portrait Gallery in Washington; *L'Âge d'Or* (1930) by Buñuel and Dalí was banned in Paris by the Board of Censors in December 1930.