

Anna Mlasowsky

From Within

Art Scene of the 23rd International Film Festival mBank New Horizons

21 July – 3 September 2023

SIC! BWA Wrocław Gallery

Orlando by Virginia Woolfe, a gender based classic explores themes present throughout Anna Mlasowsky's work represented in „From Within“. The 20th century novel about the duality of human nature, is a very important text about the fluidity and duality of man in relation to cultural circumstances and social norms. It tells the story of a young Elizabethan-era aristocrat who changes sex as events unfold – while never shown as unequivocally female – It refers to our functioning within systems imposed on us and their expectations of our bodies, emotions, identities, how we form bonds and what values we share.

In this years contribution to the New Horizons film festival, the Spanish trans writer, theoretician and curator Paul B. Preciado uses Virginia Woolfes novel as inspiration for his work -Orlando, My Political Biography, as she already has described everything in his own biography. The fluidity found in the character of Orlando, who is continuously transitioning is a core value in all aspects of Preciado's multifaceted practice.

Anna Mlasowsky's latest exhibition *From Within*, presented at SIC! gallery within the framework of the Art Scene of the 23rd International Film Festival mBank New Horizons, strongly corresponds in its narrative strategy with the character and concept of Paul B Preciados film, shown in the festival's Third Eye section.

Due to the limitations imposed, both artistic attitudes reject the hierarchies and value systems as those which only serve to categorize behaviors and bodies. Both artists create art in which they build new dimensions of resistance and emancipation. The exhibition and the film look at the intricacies of contemporary culture. *We observe the blurring of established societal boundaries and the liberation of language. Thus allowing broadened narrations for voices of the excluded and marginalized.*

From Within is both an intimate and universal cross-section of her performative works from the years 2017-2023. Anna creates objects and then interacts with them (or invites other performance artists to collaborate with her works), all of which is video recorded in order to document the materials in the process of transformation and the interaction of human bodies and the forms of objects. She treats video as an independent tool of artistic expression of abstract narrations, but still actively engaging materials, textures and the body. The artist's protagonist and ally is glass, a metamorphic matter. It provides a reflection of what has shaped her.

Anna is a German born, US based immigrant and queer woman. Growing up in the post-communist East Germany, she grew up in a changing society which has shaped her approach to art making. Influenced by occupied houses, anarchy, punk and techno, she now treasures moments of uncertainty and materials that occupy in-between states. Glass, characterized by its ability to shape shift- is for her the embodiment of queerness. It exists across a multitude of physical states between extremes of hard and soft, transparent and opaque, strong and fragile, it can take many roles and carry nuanced emotions. It lends it ability to be the only material that can be both look at and look through to both reflect on our reality and distort it.

At the From Within exhibition, Anna explores the intermediary state of (non)belonging, otherness and disobedience. From within emphasizes the ambivalent socio-cultural status of women, it examines social expectations of the female body in contrast with our own identity. Anna's works reflect the open and flexible acceptance of what escapes the norms, but also her hope for a society in which a multitude of realities will be accepted. She alternately explores geographical, cultural and sexual identities based on her own experience, but also on insightful and careful observation of the environments within which she functions.

Mika Drozdowska