

Working title 1: Valerică – Eau de Vie, Working title 2: Jurgis Lemaire vs Christophe Baltrusaitis

Artist: Nicu Ilfoveanu

Curator: Anca Verona Mihuleț

May 9th – June 15th 2014

Anca Poterașu Gallery is delighted to invite you on Friday, May 9th, 2014, at 19.00 h, at the opening of Nicu Ilfoveanu's exhibition – *Working title 1: Valerică – Eau de Vie*, *Working title 2: Jurgis Lemaire vs Christophe Baltrusaitis*, curator Anca Mihuleț.

At the beginning of a text written in 1995 about the Swiss participation of the duo Fischli & Weiss in the Venice Biennale, Bice Curiger was talking about the children born on Sundays (Sonntagskinder) and the welfare state that characterizes them ever since they were born; for them, things seem simpler and calmer, the same they found them while arriving on this planet, an unchanged condition for as long as they live. And us, "the weekday people", with all our wishes and daily hindrances, are condemned to endure the existential, almost unexplainable easiness of the "Sunday people".

Several years ago, Nicu Ilfoveanu started to photograph Valerică, a biased character, that can easily be introduced in the bestiary of the rural world in Romania. The result of this visual research is extremely dense and it evolves in two ways – one is that of organizing visual information and total harmony, and one is that of the temptation for legends, history and fables. Valerică's stories and his imagination unfold themselves in Nicu Ilfoveanu's photographs, so that the trees that grow disorderly on the river banks of a Romanian village become a thick Amazonian forest, the wounds on his forehead transform themselves in signs of power, and the extra-large suit accessorized with a holey woman T-shirt seems extracted from the last collection "back to nature style" of Christophe Lemaire.

When talking about the Romanic bestiary, the Lithuanian art historian Jurgis Baltrusaitis imagined the way in which the genius appears in a confused environment, when the elements that are usually ignored are caught together. There is a secret union of forces, that when it collaborates, it generates unexpected images, demonstrating that the transfer happens through small objects, without a special significance.

Valerică is the representant of an intimate situation, that for some is social, for others is a world's spectacle, which derives from the need of identification, of tracing the similarities between what is inside and what is outside, between the self and the other, of recapturing oneself in a mental space of attraction, where there are no rules, and if they exist, they must be broken. The criticality of the identitary discourse reduced to silence many visual manifestations, which were usually minimized in order to justify the over-imposed canon.

I am not talking here about aestheticizing the rural or the primitive, or about a politically correct trial for abstractizing the human content, more about an ideological permutation based on the imago mundi theory. In order to assert the demonstration, Nicu Ilfoveanu prepared a succession of slides, that combine 15th century history of art fragments - like Botticelli's masterpiece "The Birth of Venus" or Titian's portrait of an anonymous - with Valerică's Sunday attitude. For Venera, Valerică is an unknown man, a bit shy, but having returned from a bloody battle; for Valerică, Venera can be just a beautiful woman, that is floating, undressed, on a giant shell. But

there is something in their look that makes you think they were born on a Sunday. And it is so good, because they are not at all boring.

Partners: Aqua Carpatica, Domeniile Tohani